

# Letters

## Thanks for the books

Thank you so much for the copies of the Sergeant Major of the Army books you sent me. I am in the process of reading them both and will take them on a future trip so I may read on the airplane.

I read with interest about the two sergeants major of the Army I served with in that office, SMA [George] Dunaway and SMA [Silas] Copeland. I well remember how those two had a real concern for the American Soldier and how each wanted to do all they could to take care of them. The comment about SMA Dunaway paying for his wife's travel until someone in the system indicated the Army would take care of her travel was a true story. I made the reservations for her.

The early sergeants major of the Army really had to break new ground in that position and the system in place made it so very hard at times. Because of their past relationships with some great commanders that were then serving in the Pentagon, they got things done for Soldiers. The attitude of some of the officers there was that no sergeant major should have the power and access to the chief of staff as they did. We are thankful there were great four-star generals serving in that position that didn't foster that same thought. One day I may put down on paper the behind the scenes work that went on to accomplish good things for the Soldier and the true concern those first sergeants major of the Army had for the little boots on the ground Soldier.

Anyway, thanks for the books and I will always support the *NCO Journal*. I read each copy with interest each time we get one here in Alaska G3.

*Bobby W. Alexander  
Force Integration Div. G3  
Fort Richardson, Alaska*

## Proper probing

In the April 2004 edition on page 18 you show a sergeant probing for land mines. He is holding the probe incorrectly. The probe should be held so that if the probe was to come in contact with a mine it would slide through your palm. The way he is holding the probe does not allow the probe to slide and could cause the mine to detonate.

*Sgt. 1st Class Robert A. Rhodes  
Recruiting & Retention NCO  
California Army National Guard*

## Seeking BNCOC information

I don't get the opportunity to read each issue of the *Journal*, but when I get lucky and find a copy I am always impressed with the quality and professionalism of it. You all deserve recognition for producing a great publication.

I have been mobilized since March of 2003. During this time I have been promoted to staff sergeant. I am proud of my

accomplishment but don't feel [like] a real staff sergeant since I have not been to BNCOC yet. I have asked everyone at my unit if they have any information on it and no one has. I have looked at all of the Army Web sites I can think of for attending BNCOC and the best I could find was a packing list.

Can you please help? I want to excel at BNCOC and am looking for a list of manuals and material that I can study and prepare myself with. I would be grateful for the information you could provide. There is lots of information about PLDC and help for Soldiers attending it, but little about BNCOC. The information I am asking for would make a great article in the *Journal* and help advance our fellow Soldiers.

*Staff Sgt. Eric Kritz  
San Bernardino, Calif.*

*(Editor's note: While BNCOC and ANCOG are scheduled for some changes in the near future, Sgt. Maj. Agnes Bennett-Green, chief of ANCOG, BNCOC and Battle Staff course development, at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, said you can access all the latest information on BNCOC, including all the course information and lessons at <http://usasma.bliss.army.mil/BNCOC>.)*

## Who should run PT?

I have a professional development question that I would like to put up for discussion concerning NCO business. Ever since I've been in the Army there has been an NCO in front of the Physical Fitness Training (PT) formation conducting PT. I've seen situations when the first sergeant would run officers out of his PT formation requesting that they do PT with the other officers or by themselves. I've also seen where an officer would try to call cadence on a company run and the first sergeant would get upset with the NCOs for letting an officer call cadence. Now being a staff sergeant with 11 years in the Army I'm enforcing those same standards concerning PT to the young NCOs that I come across or lead. The other day I had to speak to the commander in reference to him telling the NCOs what's going to be on the PT training schedule, coming out and doing PT with the company, taking control of the runs and telling us where and how far to run. During my discussion with him he stated that there is nowhere in an Army regulation that states NCOs are responsible for PT. I responded back with "You're right Sir, but it's a custom (unwritten rule) that NCOs control the PT program and has been for decades." Reading the *NCO Guide*, FM 7-22-7, it states that NCOs are responsible for individual training and officers are responsible for collective training. My question to the field is, is squad/platoon/company PT considered a collective training event that officers should be responsible for or is this an NCO responsibility? Thanks for your help.

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